

Nov. 18, 1862

*(Letter with no envelope is on two sheets of lined stationery folded in half and is written on eight sides in pencil.)*

Nov. 18th, 1862

East Base of Loudon Heights

My Dear Wife,

I have a few moments this morning & improve them to tell you of our whereabouts & welfare – I wrote you Thursday last from the banks of the Shenandoah – Friday we had orders to leave there. The preceding night was cold & disagreeable. About 10 it commenced snowing & continued till sometime in the night – We did not get off till noon – My rubber coat & havelock & boots came in play finely – I got along dry as a pepper pod – We were bound for Gen. Kane's Camp somewhere in the mountains – Our way lay along down the river to a road passing thence over the ridge – Before we reached the road Gen. Kane met us & seeing that our condition in camp without tents would be miserable he told us to stop & occupy such empty buildings as we could find – One company got a good log house – another a barn (**Pg. 2**) myself & half of our stopped at an old iron forge all in ruins – the other half went on with the Capt. a mile & found another log house. - & thus we were disposed of – My boys soon had a fire & they passed a very comfortable night – Fortunately we had plenty of fresh beef & coffee with us & that saved all grumbling – There were four or five poor houses, log ones, nearby inhabited – I thought it a good opportunity to improve & going to the nearest one asked of the woman, (her husband was over the river at work she said) the privilege of setting by her fire through the night to write – She had a large family – among others one old lady 77 & no candle – I promised to furnish the candle & she said if I could get along with the noise & her poor accommodations I should be welcome – Of course noise & accommodations were no consideration with me any farther than the shelter – I got ready about 8 o'clock & she set me a rickety stand (**Pg. 3**) – It was amusing to see the curiosity of her children – The portfolio – the inkstand – the picture envelope - & the movement of my hands had their closest scrutiny – I showed them my map of Va. pointed out the place of their home on the Shenandoah & otherwise tried to delight & instruct them – It was hard work for the mother to get them off to bed – Henry Clark, the elder had the head ache badly & he concluded to stay there too – We expected to sit by the fire – but she insisted upon making a bed for us upon the floor & did so, which Clark occupied after the family had retired, some climbing by a ladder up over head, & others stowing themselves away in sundry nooks – I kept on writing till about 12 & then lay down beside Clark – Unfortunately there was a stove in the room which was used for cooking – She had a good run of customs for quick baked bread all the evening. The soldiers thronging in to buy – This heat the room hot & the (**Pg. 4**) constant opening of the door letting in cold air gave me some cold - I can sleep on the ground out of doors & wake up right – but here the 1<sup>st</sup> night I sleep in a house with fire xc. since leaving New Haven I catch cold –

(11-18-1862)

Shall take care after this & stay out of doors in the good sky parlor along with the moon & stars – But I got my 2nd report finished – Should have sent it about the time we left Pleasant Valley but for that previous night on patrol – You know we were called in from the outpost & had to march right off – Since there we have been on the go continually & I had no opportunity to use the pen upon it – If there is any complaint you can explain – I send it along today not having had a chance before, although I gave it to one who was going to head quarters Saturday but got ordered back Saturday morning the woods presented one of those beautiful winter scenes which we do much admire - Pine & hemlock are interspersed among the hard woods here & you can imagine how finely they were arrayed – We soon had commands to continue our march of the previous day (**Pg. 5**) & all about the place till noon seeking a cobbler in vain I tried the waiter business – Had the good fortune to fall in with a colored boy – a run away – 17 years old & hired him – He is naturally bright, seems willing & I hope he will prove what we wish. I expect him to do our cooking & when we march assist in taking care of our utensils – He is responsible to me & sits now just out the entrance ready for any wish – By & by we shall eat the supper to which allusion has been made - I shall send him to camp in the morning to bring up supplies, the mail of this evening & do what ever is needed - So you can think of me on the march, picketing xc with my “Youthful, accomplished contraband” close at hand – We have had rich breakfasts since that bbl arrived – Pan cakes with butter & molasses. I am sorry that I made you the expense of that molasses, tea & sugar. After sending for them I found they could be purchased of (**Pg. 6**) the W.S Commissary – Hereafter we shall be able to get all such things – The soda xc is about the same price as at home – I could not resist a laugh when that paper of rice appeared – The soldiers call rice swamp seed - They don’t consider it a rarity as you would infer if on hand at meal times. Sergt. Grannis also recd. a package of the same article & the company bbl was likewise supplied – As a general thing I have no fears about my living being good enough – I prefer to live coarsely & scantily – Tea hardtack & butter & hot cakes are about all I desire – Apples you know were my constant delight. The loss of them is more to me than all other luxuries – The most trouble I experience is the want of a good haversack – Mine that cost \$2.50 was a disgraceful shame & such are all that are for sale – If you could send me two or three little bags made of drilling, holding say a quart (**Pg. 7**) not more, with draw up tops. They would be handy to carry, tea, sugar, meat, xc. in when going off – I could thus save the trouble of papers & the mixing up to which the tumbling around often subjects all the contents – Were I at home I should get up a haversack that would be right – Perhaps sometime yet I may order one according to my plan –

We have not seen the pay master yet – Two months wages were due the 8th of this month – I have 8 dollars left - & 2 lent out – I owe Lee 13 dollars on the watch & the company about 16 for board – We have now begun to board ourselves – I was in hope we might be paid off before Smith arrives so that I could send back by him a pretty sum – Col. Ross has gone to New York – Don’t know what for – It’s getting near dark & the tea boils – Jim is ready to turn it out & sweeten – I will hold on till morning –

(11-18-1862)

**(Pg. 8)**

Morning - November 20th.

About 7 ½ o'clock last evening we recd. a note from Gen. Kane, saying we were relieved from picket duty & at liberty to return to camp – The orderly bringing the message said all the other companies had gone in - It was no desirable job to march in the dark, but we started & got in some after nine – There I found your letter of Sunday evening, acknowledging the rect. of mine – Ida, Frank & Willie also had each a letter – I thank them all, particularly Willie – Tell him he must write me as often as mother does – The weather is still bad – Men sulky – Here comes an order for battalion drill – a beautiful thing in the rain – But enough – Have not time now to review this –

Yours ever

A. Upson

*(Written upside down on first page in upper margin)*

The mail closes – We have a pleasant day – The snow will soon disappear –

Ever yours

A. Upson